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Colson on CIA

SIR: Even in the July doldrums, Tom Dowling's view that Charles Colson's charges against the CIA bear further investigation comes off as a rather irresponsible bit of column-filling.

The Colson suggestion that there was a CIA conspiracy against the President stands reason on its head. It is quite clear that what discomfiture the Agency suffered from Watergate-related events resulted precisely from too much deference to White House wishes. What really requires investigation still is the White House effort to use CIA for its own illegal purposes, whether in the Ellsberg case or in covering up the laundering of Watergate funds through a Mexican bank transfer.

A conspiracy needs a head conspirator. If President Nixon were a helpless victim of CIA, how is it that he was able to install two men personally known to and trusted by him, Generals Cushman and Walters, as successive deputy directors of CIA, and to fire—without any recorded opposition—the director, Richard Helms, who had

served presidents of both parties as a non-partisan career official?

Dowling's view in this case gives aid and comfort to the violators of law and the Constitution, who are still trying to spread false scents and cover up their tracks.

Arthur W. John,

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